

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 01525 300821Z

21

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

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R 300731Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1110

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1525

EXDIS

BEIRUT FOR RCAA DWOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN

SUBJECT: SYRIAN AIRLINES AIRCRAFT PURCHASE

REF: DAMASCUS 1489

1. GEORGE LOMBARD, LOCKHEED REPRESENTATIVE, CALLED ON ME AFTERNOON JULY 29 TO INFORM ME THAT HIS "DAMASCUS CONTACT" NOW TELLS HIM THINGS LOOK GOOD FOR THE LOCKHEED 1011B. THE SAME SOURCE HAS TOLD LOMBARD THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS MADE UP HIS MIND TO BUY LOCKHEED AND INTENDS TO MAKE THE ANNOUNCEMENT SOMETIME ON OR ABOUT AUGUST 12. IN ADDITION THE SOURCE SAID THAT LACKHEED SHOULD NOW MAKE ANOTHER PRESENTATION SUMMARIZING LOCKHEED'S CURRENT OFFER INCLUDING THE SPECIAL REDUCTIONS AND OTHER "FACAILITIES" WHICH LOCKHEED IS OFFERING. THE SOURCE RECOMMENDED THAT THIS PRESENTATION BE IN THE FORM OF A LETTER WHICH THE EMBASSY COULD TRANSMIT DIRECTLY TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER WHO IN TURN HAS BEEN ALLEGEDLY INSTRUCTED TO CONVEY TO STRAIGHTAWAY TO THE PRESIDENT.

2. I TOLD LOMBARD THAT IF HE WOULD GIVE ME THIS PRESENTATIONS I WOULD BE PLEASED, INDEED, TO CONVEY IT UNDER
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A TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER. LOMBARD WAS

WONDERING IF I MIGHT MAKE A CALL ON THE FOREIGN MINISTER AS WELL. I TOLD HIM I DID NOT THINK THIS WAS NECESSARY BUT WOULD DO SO IF AN OPPORTUNITY AROSE. HE ACCEPTED MY EXPLANATION AND PROMISED TO DELIVER THE NEW LOCKHEED PRESENTATION MATERIAL TO ME IN THE NEAR FUTURE SO THAT WE CAN PREPARE THE EMBASSY TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER OVER MY SIGNATURE.

3. COMMENT: IN VIEW OF MCDONNELL DOUGLAS' BELIEF THAT IT IS STILL IN THE RUNNING (SEE DAMASCUS 1430) I DO NOT THINK IT APPROPRIATE FOR ME TO MAKE A CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM TO DELIVER A PRESENTATION SOLELY ON LOCKHEED'S BEHALF. I THINK A LETTER OVER MY SIGNATURE WOULD BE SUFFICIENT. I INTEND TO DELIVER THE LETTER TO HAMOUD SHOULFI, DIRECTOR, AMERICAN AFFAIRS AT THE SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY, AND ASK HIM TO DELIVER IT TO KADDAM. MEANWHILE THE COMMENT OF LOCKHEED'S SOURCE THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL MAKE HIS DECISION ON OR ABOUT AUGUST 12 MAY MEAN THAT PRESIDENT ASAD HAS IN MIND HAVING HIS DECISION READY BY AMERICAN DAY AT THE DAMASCUS FAIR WHEN SECRETARY OF COMMERCE DENT ARRIVES. IF TRUE, ASAD'S PLAN MAY BE TO DEMONSTRATE TO SECRETARY DENT SYRIAN READINESS TO BE RESPONSIVE TO AMERICAN REQUESTS TO DO BUSINESS IN THE HOPE THAT USG WILL BE RESPONSIVE TO SYRIAN REQUESTS FOR OTHER ASSISTANCE. WHETHER THIS IS IN FACT THE CASE REMAINS TO BE SEEN BUT I BELIEVE THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE AWARE OF THIS POSSIBILITY.

SCOTES

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